REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are requested. Claims 1-26 remain pending in the application. By the foregoing amendment, claims 1, 13 and 22 are amended.

In numbered paragraph 4 of the final Office Action, independent claims 1, 13 and 22, along with various dependent claims, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,685,002 (Sano) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,625,611 (Teig et al.). In numbered paragraph 5 of the final Office Action, dependent claims 5-12, 17-21 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Sano patent, in view of the Teig et al. patent and U.S. 20020122067 (Geigel et al.). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants have disclosed a method for automatic layout of a photobook page. As exemplified in Applicants' Fig. 1B, in evaluating whether the photobook page is to be divided into a regular array of image areas using a modulus of the number of images and an approximated square root (block 118), a grid for an irregular array is established by assigning the number of page divisions determined along the first dimension of the photobook in operation 106 to a major axis of the photobook page (e.g., paragraph [0028]). The square root can be approximated by rounding the square root value (e.g., paragraph [0024]). For an irregular array, a page division is evaluated for further division into a multiple number of image areas by calculating rounded-up approximations of the ratio of n/m for one set of page divisions, and rounded-down approximations of the ratio of n/m for another set of page divisions. In operation 120, a given page can be divided into page divisions having different numbers of image areas (e.g., paragraphs [0029] and [0030]).

The foregoing features are broadly encompassed by the independent claims 1, 13 and 22. For example, claim 1 recites a method for automatic layout of a photobook page, including, among other recited features, approximating a square root of the number of images by rounding the square root of the number of images; and determining a number of image areas to be included in a page division using a ratio of the number of images to the approximated square root, the number of image areas for an irregular array being based on a rounded-up approximation of the ratio for one set of page divisions, and a rounded-down approximation of the ratio for another set of page divisions.

The Sano patent discloses a multi-picture image generating system in which a plurality of pictures are arranged in a single frame (abstract). As shown in FIG. 5, in Step #5, a square root $\sqrt{\ }$ (N) of the frame number (N) is calculated (col. 7, lines 31-37). However, the Examiner admits at page 5 of the final Office Action that "Sano fails to teach that the number of image areas for an irregular array being based on a rounded-up approximation of the ratio for set of page divisions, and a rounded-down approximation of the ratio for another set of page divisions. The Sano patent would not have taught or suggested "approximating a square root of the number of images by rounding the square root of the number of images;...determining a number of image areas to be included in a page division using a ratio of the number of images to the approximated square root, the number of image areas for an irregular array being based on a rounded-up approximation of the ratio for one set of page divisions, and a rounded-down approximation of the ratio for another set of page divisions," as recited in claim 1.

The Teig et al. patent does not cure the deficiencies of the Sano patent. The Teig et al. patent discloses multidimensional data being represented by providing a layered (tiled) data structure to store multidimensional data tuples that are defined in a multidimensional data space (abstract). Specifically, the Teig et al. patent discloses calculating minimum x and y indices by subtracting a halo size from the minimum coordinates of a segment S, dividing the subtraction result by the width of the tiles, and rounding down to the next integer the division result (col. 15, lines 42-50). The Teig et al. patent also calculates maximum x and y indices by adding the halo size from the maximum x-coordinate of the segment, dividing the addition result by the width of the tiles, and rounding up to the next integer the division result (col. 15, lines 51-59). However, these calculated indices as disclosed in the Teig et al. patent are 1) for the purpose of retrieving tile data structures from a two-dimensional array 905 (col. 15, lines 59-61); and 2) do not involve approximating a square root of a number of images by rounding the square root of the number of images. The Teig et al. patent would not have taught or suggested "approximating a square root of the number of images by rounding the square root of the number of images;...determining a number of image areas to be included in a page division using a ratio of the number of images to the approximated square root, the number of image areas for an irregular array being based on a rounded-up approximation of the ratio for one set of page divisions, and a rounded-down approximation of the ratio for another set of page divisions," as recited in claim 1.

The Geigel et al. publication does not cure the deficiencies of the Sano patent and the Teig et al. patent. Rather, the Geigel et al. publication was applied for its disclosure of random placement of image population as shown in Fig. 2 (paragraph

[0067]). The Geigel et al. publication would not have taught or suggested "approximating a square root of the number of images by rounding the square root of the number of images;...determining a number of image areas to be included in a page division using a ratio of the number of images to the approximated square root, the number of image areas for an irregular array being based on a rounded-up approximation of the ratio for one set of page divisions, and a rounded-down approximation of the ratio for another set of page divisions," as recited in claim 1.

The applied references, considered individually or in the combination relied upon by the Examiner, would not have taught or suggested "approximating a square root of the number of images by rounding the square root of the number of images;...determining a number of image areas to be included in a page division using a ratio of the number of images to the approximated square root, the number of image areas for an irregular array being based on a rounded-up approximation of the ratio for one set of page divisions, and a rounded-down approximation of the ratio for another set of page divisions," as recited in claim 1.

Thus, independent claims 1, 13 and 22 are allowable over the Sano patent, the Teig et al. patent, and the Geigel et al. publication. The remaining claims depend from the aforementioned independent claims and recite additional advantageous features which further distinguish over the documents relied upon by the Examiner. As such, these claims are also considered allowable.

All objections and rejections raised in the Office Action having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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